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Letter dated 19 June 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith a joint press advisory on the second meeting of the strengthened High-level Committee on humanitarian affairs (see annex), signed in Khartoum on 17 June 2009 by the Representative of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator.

I would highly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem **Mohamad**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 19 June 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint press advisory on the second meeting of the strengthened High-level Committee, Khartoum, 17 June 2009

The second High-level Committee meeting, following Ministerial Decree No. 4 of 2 May 2009, was held today at Friendship Hall, Khartoum. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Harun Lual, Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, and Ameerah Haq, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator. Other participants included senior officials of the Government of National Unity and the international community, including representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the African Union, the League of Arab States, China, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom and the European Community.

The meeting was positive, building on the constructive dialogue established at the first meeting, on 7 May, between the Government of the Sudan and the international humanitarian community. Committee members commended the progress made since the last meeting towards joint efforts to address humanitarian issues.

The Committee approved new terms of reference for the High-level Committee towards a predictable, less bureaucratic and more accountable and efficient aid system in Darfur. As agreed by all members in the last meeting, humanitarian action, including relief and early recovery programmes, needs to take place in a rules-based environment in the letter and spirit envisaged in the 2004 Moratorium (see S/2004/635, annex) and the 2007 Joint Communiqué, and as reaffirmed by the Ministerial Decrees issued on 16 April and 2 May 2009. As such, the High-level Committee will be the primary forum enabling the Government of National Unity and the international community to discuss policy and operational matters about humanitarian programmes.

The twelfth progress report on the Tripartite Joint Technical Committee (TJTC) was presented. The Committee appreciated the 11 June visit to the Joint Procedures Centre, which enhanced members' knowledge of the TJTC's current functions, issues and challenges. Joint workshops on the general directory of procedures are ongoing. In July the online database for tracking procedures will be launched, which will enable NGOs to submit annual and biannual reports.

The Committee also presented the latest updates in the key life saving sectors of health and nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and food. In all sectors the joint work done was commended and appreciated. However, concerns about delayed and insufficient funds from government and donors were also expressed. Key findings in the health sector show that while the situation has improved it is still precarious with health gaps in Southern Darfur, nutrition gaps in Western Darfur and concerns surrounding strategies so operations can continue to be sustained. In the water and sanitation sector, the Committee noted there was an improvement in water quality, however concerns still exist in effectively addressing the gaps in sanitation and hygiene. In the food sector the May/June distributions are ongoing. A further 102,000 metric tons have been prepositioned for the rainy season in Darfur for the period July to September.

In addition the meeting agreed to accept the concept of the expansion of other sectors. It was agreed that the priority sectors of education, agriculture, including animal resources, livelihoods and protection be addressed first.

The meeting concluded with a summary of the High-level Committee visit to Northern Darfur. All members expressed appreciation for the trip. The need for a political solution that would bring peace and security was stressed. The visiting team noted that a crisis had been averted through the efforts of the Government of the Sudan; the United Nations and partners but highlighted that some gaps remain particularly as the rainy season approaches.

All members agreed that field visits are extremely useful. Future visits will focus on one state (capital and rural areas) with the next trip scheduled to take place to Southern Darfur before the next meeting.

The High-level Committee will meet again in one month.

(*Signed*) Harun **Lual**
Minister for Humanitarian Affairs

(*Signed*) Ameerah **Haq**
United Nations Resident Coordinator
and Humanitarian Coordinator